

Amendment to the Specification:

Please amend the specification by inserting the following paragraph immediately after the Title:

“Cross Reference to Related Application

This application is a 371 of PCT/US2003/023933 filed July 31, 2003.”

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 23 of the specification using the following paragraph:

Referring to the drawings, **FIGURE 1** shows a shell and tube reactor **10**, which includes a head **15** defining a feed plenum or headspace **20**, a short bed of packing material **30**, a heat exchanger shell **40** and a plurality of reactor tubes **50** disposed in the reactor. The feed plenum includes a distributor **60** for admixing reactants in a feed gas mixture. The feed plenum **20** is in communication with the plurality of reactor tubes **50** in a heat exchanger **40**, through an end plate **55**. The dimensions of the feed plenum or headspace **20** can vary with the cross-section area of the reactor tubes in the reactor **10**. For example, the feed plenum can be from about 5 to about 14 feet tall, with a diameter of the feed plenum from about 2 to about 20 feet. The plurality of reactor tubes **50** with reactor tube inlets **70** are surrounded by a heat exchanger medium **80**. For example, the heat exchange medium **80** can be a salt. Typically, the salt coolant can include melts of salts. Suitable salts include potassium nitrate, potassium nitrite, sodium nitrite and/or sodium nitrate or metals having a low melting point, for example, sodium, mercury or alloys of various metals. The temperature of the heat exchange medium can be less than 450°C, more preferably about 420°C. Specifically, Dupont's HITEC salt can be used, which includes about 53% potassium nitrate, about 40% sodium ~~nitrite~~ nitrate, and about 7% sodium nitrate. Contaminants formed by decomposition of anions in salt coolant can leak through the end plate area **65** into the feed plenum **20** in the event of a reactor break. It is believed that the salt leaks first and then decomposes in the presence of rust and oxidation catalyst.